United Nations

Daily Highlights

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WEDNESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

- Advance team arrives in Belgrade to explain to Yugoslav parties implementation of plan for United Nations peace-keeping operation.

- Secretary-General welcomes recent agreement between the two Koreas aimed at improving relations between them.

- General Assembly endorses responsibility of States to organize their own elections; appeals for non-interference from outside.

- Secretary-General's Executive Delegate announces new pledges received for the United Nations Guards Contingent in Iraq.

- Chairman of Palestinian Rights Committee, announcing her departure from New York, says tireless efforts are beginning to bear fruit.

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Secretary-General Javier Pérez de Cuéllar said today that the advance team to prepare for the possible deployment of a United Nations peace-keeping operation in Yugoslavia would arrive in Belgrade this evening.

He told correspondents upon entering the Secretariat that the 21-member team would provide clarification to the three Yugoslav parties and explain how to implement the peace-keeping plan that his Special Envoy Cyrus Vance discussed with them on his last mission to Yugoslavia. The team would report back to the Secretary-General as soon as possible.

On Sunday 15 December, the Security Council gave the green light for the sending of the preparatory team, and indicated that full compliance with the cease-fire agreement, signed on 23 November in Geneva, would permit accelerated consideration of the placement of a peace-keeping force in Yugoslavia.

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For information media—not an official record

The Secretary-General said today through his Spokeswoman that he warmly welcomed the recent agreement between the two Koreas aimed at improving relations between the two sides all the more since he was responsible for the question of Korea when he was Under-Secretary-General and had followed the developments in the Korean peninsula very closely over the years. Mr. Pérez de Cuéllar expressed hope that these trends towards a peaceful solution would be maintained.

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The General Assembly has reaffirmed that it was the concern solely of peoples to determine methods and establish institutions regarding the electoral process. It strongly appealed to States to refrain from taking actions to undermine the electoral process in any country.

By another decision yesterday, the Assembly asserted its belief that the international community should continue to give serious consideration to ways in which the United Nations could respond to the requests of Member States seeking to strengthen their electoral procedures. It also endorsed the Secretary-General's view that he should designate a senior official in his Offices as the focal point for handling those requests.

Today, the Assembly adopted a "New Agenda" for the development of Africa in the 1990s, as set out in an Annex to the report of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Review and Appraisal of the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development 1986-1990.

The report, adopted without a vote, stressed that while Africa's development was primarily the responsibility of Africans, the international community should accept the principle of shared responsibility and full partnership with Africa and commit itself to fully supporting African efforts.

In other actions this morning, the Assembly requested the United Nations system to continue the consideration of possible technical and other specialized assistance and specific actions in the areas most affected by the Chernobyl nuclear accident.

Regarding the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction (1990s), the Assembly commended the initiatives already taken by the countries exposed to disasters to reduce their vulnerability, and encouraged them to continue with the adoption and implementation of national disaster mitigation policies.

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The Secretary-General's Executive Delegate, Sadruddin Aga Khan, announced today that the United Nations Guards Contingent in Iraq has received new pledges from Luxembourg, Germany, Norway and the United Kingdom totalling some $8 million.

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A press release issued at Headquarters said that the additional pledges would cover the Contingent's needs to the end of the year. Until now, lack of funds had necessitated repatriation of a number of Guards so that the Contingent now numbered 360 Guards.

The Contingent's strength would be restored within the next few weeks to 500 Guards, the press release said.

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The Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, Absa Claude Diallo (Senegal), this morning informed the Committee that she had been called by her Government to take up other duties and would be leaving New York at the end of the week.

In her farewell statement, she drew attention to the "tireless and devoted efforts" of the Committee, which had now begun to bear fruit. She said she looked forward to the day when Palestine would be able to sit as a full member state of the United Nations. Until that day, the Committee would continue to work in support of the rights of the Palestinian people. It was her hope that peace would triumph in 1992.

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